

## Message Text

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53

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 /050 W

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R 201541Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9250

S E C R E T BUENOS AIRES 9185

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AR (RAUL LASTIRI)

SUBJECT: CHAMBER OF DEPUTY PRESIDENT HITS THE BOTTLE

1. EMBASSY HAS HEARD REPORTS OVER PAST SEVERAL WEEKS THAT RAUL LASTIRI, PRESIDENT OF CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, IS DRINKING HEAVILY AND DEVOTING MORE TIME TO NIGHT LIFE THAN TO HIS OFFICIAL DUTIES. THIS HAS NOW BEEN CONFIRMED BEYOND ANY DOUBT BY RELIABLE SOURCE VERY CLOSE TO LASTIRI. LASTIRI IS REPORTED TO HAVE DROPPED OUT OF SIGHT ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS AND TO HAVE BEEN UNAVAILABLE TO HANDLE URGENT MATTERS FOR PERIODS OF MORE THAN TWENTY FOUR HOURS. TWO LONG-TIME PERONIST CONTACTS HAVE EXPRESSED DISGUST WITH HIM AND SAID HIS CONDUCT OF LATE HAS BEEN SUCH THAT THEY NO LONGER HAVE ANY CONFIDENCE IN HIM.

2. LASTIRI'S DEPORTMENT MUST HAVE REACHED EXTREMES TO HAVE SO NEGATIVELY IMPRESSED NORMALLY WORLDLY ARGENTINES. PRIOR TO 1973 ELECTIONS, LASTIRI KNOWN TO HAVE HAD SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEM (CANCER OF PROSTATE), WHICH, ACCORDING TO SOURCES CLOSE TO HIM, WAS TAKEN CARE OF BY SURGERY. DURING PAST MONTH, HOWEVER, EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED SEVERAL REPORTS THAT THERE HAS BEEN RECURRENCE OF PROBLEM. IT COULD, THEN, BE HEALTH WHICH HAS TOUCHED OFF HIS DRINKING.

3. WHATEVER THE CAUSE, THE POTENTIAL POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES ARE SERIOUS. AN ELEMENT OF STABILITY IN PRESENT SITUATION HAD BEEN CONSIDERATION THAT IF MRS PERON STEPPED ASIDE OR

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PROVED UNACCEPTABLE, CONSTITUTIONAL NICETIES COULD BE MAINTAINED

BY HAVING ALLENDE (SECOND IN LINE OF SUCCESSION) RESIGN AND  
LASTIRI, IN WHOM MOST HAD MORE CONFIDENCE THAN IN MRS PERON  
ANYWAY, TAKE OVER. LASTIRI MAY COME OUT OF PRESENT BINGE,  
OR IN EMERGENCY MIGHT RISE TO THE OCCASION. THESE ARE UNKNOWN  
FACTORS. KNOWN FACTORS, HOWEVER, ARE SUCH AS TO CAST SOME  
DOUBT ON LASTIRI'S ROLE IN SUCCESSIONAL EQUATION.  
HILL

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 20 DEC 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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